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By COLONEL FEDOROV

THE RED ARMY

An Army of the People

by

COLONEL FEDOROV

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PORTRAIT OF MARSHAL JOSEPH STALIN, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE RED ARMY.

THE RED ARMY

an Army of the People

by

COLONEL FEDOROV

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

Admiration for the Red Army is so much taken for granted at the present time that it is often forgotten that, only a couple of years ago, people still had the most extraordinary ideas about Russia's military might. Almost everybody underestimated the strength of the Soviet Union: Some people in this country and the U.S.A. prophesied that the Nazi armies would "cut through the Red Army like a hot knife through butter," others calculated the duration of Soviet resistance in terms of months, and yet others based their outlook on the assumption that the Nazis would be in the Caucasus and the Urals within a year. They all made a great mistake.

And Hitler made a great mistake too. Instead of a six months' campaign to put Russia out of action once and for all, he has suffered vast and irreplaceable losses on the Russian front. Hitler had not even adequately prepared for his first Russian winter, a speedy victory had seemed so certain.

But there was some excuse for this underestimation of Russia by those who did not know the background of the Red Army. For, on the face of it, there were certain important factors in Germany's favour: Germany already controlled the whole industry of occupied Europe. And Germany itself had a higher industrial production than the U.S.S.R. except in the case of oil. In spite of the tremendous progress made by the U.S.S.R. under the Five Year Plans, Germany still held economic superiority in 1941. Hitler thought this superiority would prove a decisive factor in his favour.

Secondly, the Nazis were fully mobilised, and had had experience of large scale war in Europe before they attacked the U.S.S.R. They hoped that with this initial military superiority they would be able to deal a knock-out blow before the Russians could fully mobilise.

Thirdly, the Nazis seriously hoped that all those who, in Britain and America, had for years been wooed by talk of the fight against Bolshevism, would again come back to the fold, that a patched-up peace in the West would be achieved, so that the Russians could be dealt with before any further hostilities with the other Allied Nations would be necessary.

But Hitler miscalculated. And all those in Britain and U.S.A. who counted on a speedy Soviet collapse were mistaken.

What were the factors on the Russian side that both Hitler, and so many military critics and experts in the Allied countries, overlooked?

It was not the size of Russia. The size of Russia was known to everybody. The size of Russia was in no way a surprise to the Nazis, an unexpected obstacle. Nor was it the Russian winter. Everyone knew that the Russian winters are cold. Hitler knew and our own experts knew. So that the Russian climate and the vast territory of the U.S.S.R. were known to Hitler in advance, before he made his calculations. They were known to the military critics of all countries. They therefore do not explain the surprise which was experienced everywhere at the magnificent resistance of the Russians.

For the background of this resistance, two things must be understood: The nature of the Red Army, its origin and growth. Secondly, the Soviet way of life. It is only a knowledge of these things which can fill the gap and explain how it was that Hitler so grievously miscalculated.

In this book Colonel Fedorov explains. He writes as a Red Army colonel, to whom the Red Army and the Soviet regime are the normal way of life. In fact, he so much takes these things for granted that, in one or two places his statements—mere statements of everyday fact to the Soviet citizen—may come as a shock to the British reader. Therefore in presenting this little book, we have taken the liberty, in one or two places, to insert some additional information to bring home this or that point in greater detail. Wherever this has been done, the additional material is printed in *italics*.

Apart from this, Colonel Fedorov himself speaks direct to the British reader, and the book should help to clarify many points not yet appreciated concerning the Red Army and the causes of its achievements.

CHAPTER I

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS: AN ARMY OF THE PEOPLE

On a colossal front of more than two thousand miles, a ceaseless struggle of a violence unprecedented in history has been going on for nearly three years. In this struggle the Red Army has fought alone against the united forces of the Germans, Rumanians, Italians, Finns, and Hungarians, and has excited the admiration of the whole world by its steadfast courage and unsurpassed heroism.

The Red Army will be twenty-six years old on February 23rd, 1944. It is a young army. It entered the present war against the German Fascist invaders at a moment's notice and yet it not only stood up to the furious assault of the fully mobilized German army, the strongest in Europe, before whose attack other European armies went down like ninepins—but on several fronts it exhausted the German troops, bled them white and drove them back towards the west, destroying their manpower, capturing their weapons and equipment and liberating one Soviet province after another from Hitler's hordes.

The Red Army celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary a year ago with a series of important successes. The classic annihilation of the German Fascists at Stalingrad, the successful offensives on the upper and lower Don, in the northern Caucasus, at Voronezh and on the central front, and, finally, the relief of Leningrad after nearly seventeen months of siege—such was the brief record of these early successes. On its twenty-fifth birthday the Red Army had already passed all tests of strategic and tactical maturity.

The Red Army is fulfilling with honour the great historic mission of which Comrade Stalin spoke in Moscow's Red Square on November 7th, 1941. After overcoming great difficulties and obstacles, the Red Army has brought to our Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian brothers the hope of liberation from the slavery and humiliation, ill-treatment and pillage inflicted by the German Fascist bandits. The Red Army brings freedom to those who have been subjected to the yoke of Nazi tyranny, and inspires all the European nations enslaved by the German invaders with hope and faith in the future.

In the first months of the present war not only enemies but even some friends of the Red Army in foreign countries either did not believe or at least were not certain that the Red Army would win any great victories. Many only reckoned in terms of weeks when estimating the powers of Soviet resistance. So profound was the impression created in Europe by the victories of the Germans and so great the effect of Nazi propaganda, which ceaselessly trumpeted abroad that the German army was invincible!

This legend of the invincibility of the German armies has now been completely disproved by the Red Army. And the other freedom-loving peoples, noting with enthusiasm and admiration every victorious advance of the Red Army, are asking: What is the secret of the success of the Red Army and of its growing strength?

I. THE RED ARMY WAS BORN IN STRUGGLE AGAINST THE GERMAN INVADERS

It was in February, 1918. The rapid spread of Soviet power, begun in October, 1917, was at an end. The Soviets ruled from one end to the other of the vast territory of the old and defunct Russian Empire. For the first time in the history of the human race the workers and peasants of a great country had become the masters of their own fate. A majestic perspective opened before them: To build a new Socialist way of life. The hidden creative powers of millions of working men and women came to light in the desire to take part in the transformation of the country.

The Soviet government took every possible measure to extricate the country from the state of war in which it has been plunged since 1914. A "Decree On Peace" was adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets and a manifesto was issued to all belligerent nations proposing that a just and democratic peace be concluded on the basis of the recognition of the right of each people to an independent national existence.

On December 3rd, 1917, hostilities between Soviet Russia and Germany came to an end. But subsequent events showed that Wilhelm II used the peace negotiations merely as a screen behind which to conceal the sinister intentions of the German government. On February 18th Germany broke off peace negotiations and thirty German divisions took the offensive against the young Soviet republic on a front stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea. German troops were rapidly approaching Petrograd and Kiev, while Austrians and Hungarians were advancing towards Odessa.

Exhausted by the sufferings of three years of war, the disintegrated Tsarist army was unable to hold up the attack. The blows of the German army sent it reeling back towards the interior. The German bandits were invading the Soviet republic with the object of turning our country into a German colony.

A very grave danger threatened us—a menace directed against the very existence of our Soviet state at a time when the country was in a very difficult position, even without the additional problem of a foreign invasion.

Our workers had not had time to organise production, regulate the exchange of goods, arrange for food supplies, increase the productivity of labour. . . .

"We have achieved much," said Lenin. "We have set out feet on this road, but it is clear that the new, higher economic order has not yet been established. . . .

"A country of small peasant holdings, a country hungry and exhausted by war, only just beginning to heal its wounds; and against it a nation with a higher productivity of labour both technically and organically"—such was the objective position in 1918.

The military danger was great. The difficulties of organising our defence against this danger were also great.

But the people who within a short period had organised three revolutions and won their liberty could not and did not lose heart. They found sufficient forces to ward off the danger menacing the country and they preserved the great achievements of the Revolution.

On the 21st of February, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars addressed a manifesto to all Soviet working people, beginning with the words: "Our Socialist Fatherland is in danger!" The manifesto was the work of Lenin. The Bolshevik party and the Soviet government called upon the workers and peasants to defend every position, every inch of Soviet ground to their last breath. The working people, especially those of the industrial centres, responded to the manifesto by an increased stream of recruits to the Red Army.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies set up a committee for the revolutionary defence of the city and the mobilisation of all the forces of the people for the defeat of the enemy. In the factories of Petrograd volunteers were recruited for the units of the Red Army. Several factories decided to mobilise all workers employed there.

Within a short time many units of the Red Army were formed of volunteers from among the workers of Petrograd. The "Vulcan" factory contributed a contingent of 500



SOLDIERS AND MANY OFFICERS OF THE TSARIST ARMY CAME OVER TO THE REVOLUTION.

men. Sestroretsk dockyard sent 600 men to the Red Army. The Baltic shipyards mobilised all workers up to fifty years of age. In a few days the Petrograd workers sent about 22,000 men into the ranks of the Red Army.

The workers of Moscow followed the example set by Petrograd. An "Extraordinary Command of the Moscow Military Region" set up in these days issued a call to all workers. It said: "The enemy is at the gates. There is not a day, not an hour to be lost. The advance guards of the German invaders have entered Pskov. They are threatening Petrograd. Petrograd has mobilised. Workers of Moscow, they are expecting help from us. We must give them this help. Organise units of a Socialist army without delay. Go to-day to the local headquarters of the Red Guard, go to the regimental committees, put down your names for volunteer units. To arms, workers! The conquests of the Socialist Revolution are in danger. The invaders would trample them underfoot. Enemies of the working-class in our own country would help the invaders. Shameful slavery threatens us. Workers, soldiers, peasants. We cannot permit the workers to be turned into slaves. All to arms. All rally to the banners of the Socialist armies!"

Units of the Red Army were rapidly coming into existence in Moscow as well as in Petrograd.

Other great industrial cities soon followed the example set by Moscow and Petrograd. The workers of Tula, Ivanovo-Vosnesensk, Yaroslavl, Tver, Kiev, Minsk, Kharkov and other cities took up arms in defence of their country and their revolution.

Thus, literally in a single week, a large number of armed units formed of workers came into being throughout the country. They constituted the basic core of the armed forces of the young Soviet republic. Many soldiers of the old Army joined up with this core. The Soviet government made every possible effort to arm the units of the Red Army and provide them with all the necessary equipment.

On February 23rd, 1918, the first units of the Red Army decisively checked the German invaders in a battle near Pskov and Narva. They routed the much-vaunted troops of the army of the Kaiser, regarded as "invincible" at that time also. The onslaught of German imperialism on the young Soviet republic was beaten off by units of the Red Army who, in these historic battles, showed the greatest courage, determination, daring and discipline and proved that they were ready to fight the enemies of their country to their last breath.

This is how the commander of a unit of our advance forces described the action of our troops near Pskov:

"In this short time many units have already acquired a solid reputation. In the Pskov area it is generally known how reliable and conscientious are the Red Guard units from Schluesselburg and Kronstadt and the Putilov factory, how accurately they fulfil all tasks and what iron discipline they keep; it is known how daring, how loyal to each other, and how prepared for any risky enterprise are the men of the unit nicknamed the "Wolf Pack." People know the self-sacrificing work of the armoured train and its scouts, the high battle qualities of the Red Army men, the exemplary subordination and high morale of the Latvians. At this time all units were competing with each other to contribute in the greatest possible measure to the defence of the Soviet republic and of the conquests of the revolution."*

Thus was the first Red Army in the world formed in the struggle against the German invaders—an army of a new type, defender of a Socialist country.

February 23rd, 1918, the day of the defeat of the troops of German imperialism, became the birthday of the Red Army.

The repulse of the German onslaught at the approaches to Petrograd proved that the Soviet people, despite all difficulties, was prepared to defend its freedom and independence against any foreign invader and at any cost, even of life itself, and that it was capable of withstanding any enemy.

II. THE RED ARMY IN THE YEARS OF CIVIL WAR AND FOREIGN INTERVENTION 1918-1920.

Making good use of the breathing-space afforded by the peace of Brest-Litovsk (concluded with Germany on March 3rd, 1918) the Soviet government took in hand the strengthening of the Red Army.

New units were formed all over the country. The regional, district, borough and local military commissariats registered the citizens fit for military service and laid the foundations for the new armed forces of the republic. The duration of service in the Red Army was fixed, and on April 22, 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee issued a decree

* Documents relating to the History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R., Vol. I. (Russian Edition) p. 110.



RED ARTILLERY IN 1918.

introducing obligatory military training for all male citizens up to the age of 40. On that same day the same authority adopted by special decree the form of oath, or rather solemn promise, which each member of the Red Army had to give on joining the colours :

"... I promise that at the first call of the Workers' and Peasants' Government I will take up arms to defend the Soviet Republic from all dangers and from all attacks of its enemies and that in the struggle for the Russian Soviet Republic, for the cause of Socialism and the brotherhood of nations I will not spare my efforts or my life."

This first Red Army oath was of the greatest significance. It reminded every soldier, every commander and every political worker in the army of their great duty towards their country and towards the workers, of their sacred obligations in the defence of the freedom and happiness of the people. It welded together the ranks of the Red Army, strengthened the military cohesion of its units and helped to produce its steadfast courage and mass heroism.

The establishment of a political organisation in the army and the introduction of military commissars was one of the most important measures taken by the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government for the strengthening of the Red Army. The political organisation and the military commissars directed political work in all regiments, battalions and companies, organised cultural and educational work, promoted the establishment of strict discipline, assisted the military specialists, and at the same time supervised their activities.

The military commissars carried on widespread propaganda work among the troops. They explained the policy of the Soviet government and generally discussed current affairs with the men. They raised the level of political consciousness and of morale, and inspired the men and commanders with hatred of the enemy, with devotion to their country and with determination to defend it to the last.

The Soviet government thus gradually created the armed forces needed by the Soviet state and strengthened step by step the military might of the young Soviet Republic.

As Lenin had predicted, the breathing-space proved to be short. When it ended, the work of creating a mighty Red Army was not yet completed. The further development and strengthening of the Red Army was carried out during the war against the foreign armies of intervention and the White Guards, a war which began in that same year, 1918.



RED GUARDS IN PETROGRAD, MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION, 1917.

The German invaders gave us no peace despite the fact that they had signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. With monstrous perfidy and duplicity they exploited the treason of the counter-revolutionary Ukrainian Rada, they occupied the Ukraine, then the Crimea, seized Rostov-on-Don and penetrated into the Caucasus.

The Germans thought that by seizing Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Caucasus they would be able to restore the position on their own tottering home front and strengthen their position on the Western Front, where they were facing France and Britain. In the territories they invaded they deposed the Soviet authorities and established their own bandit "order," dealing mercilessly with the inhabitants, and robbing them of their grain, meat and cattle. The German army stole literally everything they could lay hands on, they were now only "a gang of robbers who violated other nations," as Lenin described them.

Again the workers' Red Guard battalions of Moscow and Petrograd, of Kiev and Kharkov, of Minsk and other Ukrainian and Byelorussian cities rallied to defend every inch of their native land. On March 22nd the workers of Nikolayev rose against the occupying forces and drove them out of the town. The workers and soldiers of Kherson defended themselves valiantly against a strong attack of the Germans and held them off for nearly three weeks.

"The formation of a peasant Red Army, the mobilisation of a workers' Red Guard, a number of successful skirmishes with the "civilised" invaders after the first outbreaks of panic, the recapture of Bakhmach, Konotop and Nyzhyn and the approach to Kiev, the constantly growing enthusiasm of the masses who came in their thousands to fight their would-be enslavers—such was the answer of the Ukraine to the onslaught of the invaders."*

Guerilla warfare, a war of the people, developed widely throughout the Ukraine. Partisan groups came into being everywhere, some of them quite large, such as those of the Poltava, Kharkov and Kiev provinces. In the course of the war these groups evolved into units of such undying fame as the regiments of Bogun and Shchors and the partisan regiment led by Bozhenko, a Kiev cabinet-maker.

* Stalin : Papers and Speeches on the Ukraine (Soviet Edition).

In the Donets basin the 1st Lugansk Socialist Detachment, commanded by Comrade K. E. Voroshilov, later grew into the 5th Ukrainian Army which fought a heroic campaign of nearly six weeks of continuous bitter defensive battles against the Germans.

In their struggle against the invaders the insurgent partisan groups of the Ukraine grew in numbers and increased in strength until they finally merged with the regular formations of the Red Army.

Together, the young Red Army and the Ukrainian partisans routed the German army of occupation and drove it from Soviet soil. The German imperialists were rudely awakened from their dream of conquering the Ukraine, the Crimea and the Caucasus and seizing a rich booty of oil, grain and coal. The "short, sharp blow" with which the Germans expected to attain their objective did not come off—instead of an easy victory they found utter defeat and death on Soviet soil. Of the 500,000 German officers and men sent to subjugate the Ukraine, more than 250,000 paid with their lives for their innumerable crimes committed against the Ukrainian people.

Like the people of the Ukraine, the peoples of the Caucasus rose as one man for a holy war of liberation against the Germans. At the call of the Bolshevik party and of the Soviet government they and all the other nations inhabiting the Soviet Union formed themselves into armed bands or recruited units for the Red Army to repel the invaders.

The Third Congress of the Working Peoples of the Terek, held in Grosny in May, 1918, adopted a special resolution which reads:

"In this hour of extreme peril and grave trials, when the hordes of Germans, Haidamaks and Turks, making common cause with the traditional enemies of the people, are over-running the homelands of free and industrious peoples in order to plunder and enslave them—this congress of representatives of the Tsetsenets, Ingush, Ossetins, Kabardines, Balkars, Cossacks, immigrants, political parties and public welfare workers declare unanimously that the free sons of the Terek land will fight to the last man, and will prefer a glorious death on the battlefield, in the fight for freedom, to slavery and the infamy of a foreign yoke. We send our enthusiastic greetings to the valiant fighters for the glory and honour of a free Russia. We, the free workers, peasants, Cossacks and mountaineers of the Terek land will rally to the banner of freedom and form an impregnable stronghold for the defence of our great Russian Soviet republic. . . ."

Born in the course of the war against the German invaders, our Red Army grew, came of age, acquired much experience and developed into a formidable force capable of giving a good account of itself in the struggle against any of the enemies of the Soviet republic.

For the German invaders were not our only enemies at that time.

In the first half of 1918, Allied troops landed in Soviet territory and began hostilities. Together with counter-revolutionary White Guard units they instituted a blockade and cut off the central Soviet regions from the areas providing raw materials, food and fuel. The country was caught in a ring of fire.

The young Soviet republic experienced critical days. Food was scarce. The workers of Moscow and Petrograd had to make do with a ration of one-eighth of a pound of bread for two days. Often there was no bread at all. Factories had to close down because of the lack of raw materials or fuel.

In those days our Red Army did not as yet possess the requisite number of experienced soldiers and commanders. As a result of the blockade, the disorganisation of economic life, and the backwardness of our industry, it suffered from a scarcity of munitions, uniforms, and food supplies, of all of which the enemy troops had plenty. This circumstance made the enemy confident that Soviet Russia would be an easy prey. "All prominent writers, military experts and historians of revolution of all countries and nations, all the so-called savants, were unanimous in declaring that the days of the Soviets were numbered, and that their defeat was inevitable."‡

The position of the Soviet Republic, besieged from every side, was extremely grave. Stalin described it in these words on November 7th, 1941, at the parade of the Red Army in the Red Square, Moscow:—

"At that time three-quarters of our country was in the hands of the foreign interventionists. We had temporarily lost the Ukraine, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Urals, Siberia, and the Far East. We had no allies, we had no Red Army—we had only just begun to create it; we experienced a shortage of bread, a shortage of arms, a shortage of clothing. At that time fourteen States were ranged against our country."

* Documents relating to the History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R. (Soviet Edition).

‡ Short History of the C.P.S.U. (Cobbett Publishing Co.) p. 223.

But in spite of all these difficulties the Soviet people successfully defended the freedom, honour and independence of our country. From the unequal struggle it was the Red Army which emerged as victor.

How and why could the Red Army defeat the troops of the foreign invaders and of the White Guards, who had such an overwhelming military and economic superiority?

The reason, above all, was that the Soviet people and the Red Army were waging a patriotic and a just war. The policy of the Soviets, in whose name the Red Army carried on the struggle, was a just and correct policy, arousing the support and enthusiasm of the people. The masses understood Soviet policy, regarded it as their own, and supported it to the last. This is why the Bolshevik party and the Soviet government were able in a very short time to create a Red Army first numbering a million, then three million and finally five million men. This is why the best sons of our people, a large number of industrial workers and peasants, volunteered for service in the Red Army. It was sufficient for the government to give the word: "The Socialist Fatherland is in danger," and tens of thousands of workers volunteered for the front line. They joined the Red Army, carrying into its ranks a spirit of iron discipline and organisation, and an unshakable faith in victory.

The Red Army defeated the huge armies of intervention and the White Guards because it was true to the people and the people gave it every support. Because (a) The Red Army men understood the aims and purposes of the war and recognised its justice; (b) the recognition of the justice of the aims and purposes of the war strengthened their discipline and fighting efficiency; and, as a result, (c) the Red Army displayed unprecedented self-sacrifice and mass heroism throughout the struggle against the enemy.

The mass heroism of the Red Army men in the struggle against the foreign armies of intervention and the Whites in 1918-1920 was a shining example of the discipline, courage and honour that can be shown by a people liberated by their own Revolution.

The deeds of the men who fought on all fronts in those fatal years will forever survive in the memory of coming generations as an inspiration to all defenders of their own countries. History will preserve the memory of the gallant sailors of the Baltic and Black Sea fleets, the daring fighters of the Chapayev division, of Bohun's and Tarashchan's men, the storm of Krassnaya Gorka, the taking of Perekop and Volochayevka.

The Soviet people ungrudgingly supported the Red Army with every means at its command. The workers of the armament factories worked with unprecedented devotion to the cause. The military and political alliance of the workers and peasants came into being and was consolidated in the fire of the civil war. The peasants supplied food to the Red Army and the urban population, because they knew that Soviet power had given them the land and that the Red Army was fighting to defend their interests.

Hence the rear of the Red Army during the Civil War was far more dependable and solid than the hinterland of any of the numerous White Guard "governments," established with the funds of the interventionist powers, could possibly be.

Throughout the territory seized by the armies of intervention and White Guards, partisans of the Soviets led by the Bolsheviks formed guerilla detachments which harassed and exhausted the enemy by sudden daring raids in their rear.

The heroism of the workers, the military and political alliance of the workers and peasants, the partisan movement—such were the main factors of the victory of the Red Army.

The leading core of the Red Army, both at the front and in the hinterland, was the Bolshevik Party, which sent a great proportion of its effectives, its best forces, into the ranks.

Lenin and Stalin took an intensive part in the daily work connected with the Army's creation. Leading party workers, such as Lenin, Stalin, Kalinin, Molotov, Sverdlov, Ordzhonikidze, Mikoyan, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Zhdanov, Andreyev, and others were engaged in its political education.

The Bolsheviks served as a unifying force within the Red Army, they showed an example of devotion, discipline, order and organisation. They were models of courage and daring, heroism and self-sacrifice. They gave their lives in thousands on the battlefields because they knew that they were fighting for a just cause, that the Red Army had to defeat the enemy in order to guarantee that freedom and progress to the people for which they had struggled for decades. Their faith in victory inspired millions of others at the front and in the rear.

RED SOLDIERS AND THEIR ARMS I.



RIFLES AGAINST AIRCRAFT.



RIFLEMEN.

Another of the factors which decided the struggle against the armies of intervention and the White Guards in favour of the Red Army was the strategic plan of campaign worked out by Stalin. It was on the basis of this plan, approved by Lenin, that the Red Army routed the enemy. Stalin himself directed the destruction of the enemy hordes.

Such were the principal factors which determined the strength of the Red Army and gave it the victory over the foreign armies of intervention and the White Guards in the battles of 1919-1920.

III. THE RED ARMY ON GUARD.

At the end of 1920 our country, ruined by almost seven years of war, found itself for the first time in a position to make a start with the peaceful building of a Socialist society.

The Red Army was now faced with new problems. A considerable part had to be demobilised, while retaining its best cadres and strengthening its organisation and fighting capacity. For the training of qualified commanders it was necessary to organise the study of the experiences of the first world war and the civil war.

However, circumstances did not permit an immediate large-scale reduction in the numbers of the Red Army. The danger of further armed attacks on the young Soviet republic was by no means ended. The Red Army still had to mop up the fronts remaining in existence in the Far East and the Caucasus. Hence demobilisation could not be completed until 1924.

On January 26th, 1924, at the meeting of the Second All-Union Soviet Congress held on the occasion of the death of Lenin, Comrade Stalin, standing by Lenin's coffin, made a solemn vow in the name of the whole Soviet people and recalled Lenin's warning that the respite from war might be short. Stalin said: "More than once Lenin pointed out to us that the strengthening of the Red Army and the improvement of its condition is one of the most important tasks of our Party. . . . Let us vow then, comrades, that we will spare no effort in order to strengthen our Red Army and our Red Navy."*

These words of Stalin served as the foundation and inspiration for the subsequent policy of the Soviet Government and the great efforts made by the workers to increase the defence capacity of the country. The Soviet Government gave daily thought and care to developing the fighting efficiency of the Red Army and Red Navy. In this, the policy of industrialisation and collectivisation promoted by Lenin and Stalin were of decisive importance.

The decade 1930 to 1940 was a period of great technical advance in the Red Army. The rapidly expanding industry provided a growing amount of new fighting machines. New branches of industry grew up—tank, aircraft and motor engineering.

As compared with 1930, changes in the technical equipment of the army up to 1939 are illustrated by the following figures:—

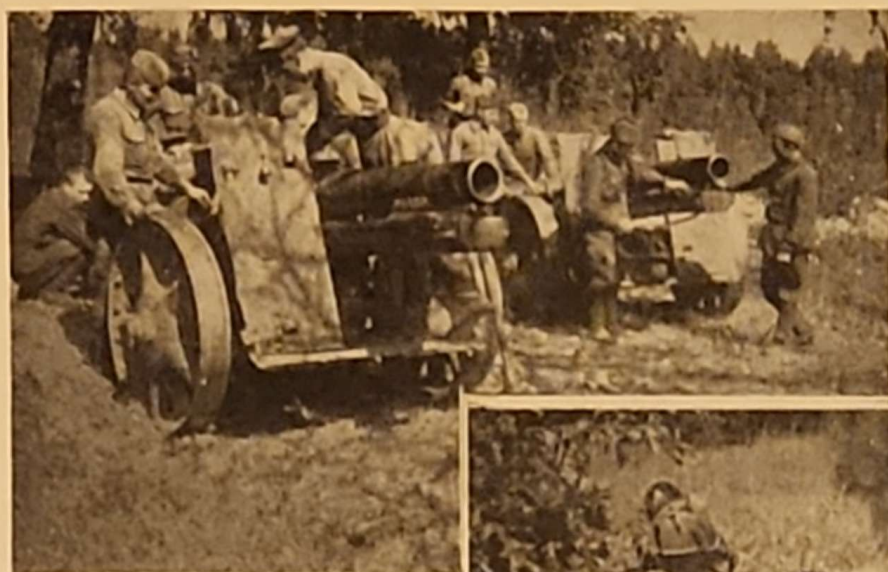
Tanks, a forty-threefold increase; aeroplanes increased by $6\frac{1}{2}$ times; medium and heavy artillery, almost sevenfold; small calibre anti-tank and tank guns, seventyfold; machine-rifles and machine-guns an increase of $5\frac{1}{2}$ times.†

The following data will further serve to show the growth in mechanisation of the army. In 1930 the distribution of mechanical horse-power in the army amounted to 3.07 for every soldier. In 1939, with an increase of more than 3.5 times in the number of soldiers, the figure had risen to 13 horse-power per head. The full significance of the effort which the Soviet Government expended in strengthening the military might of the country is particularly evident to-day, in war time.

* ON LENIN - J. Stalin (Lawrence & Wishart) p.22.

† From the report of Klimenty Voroshilov at the Extraordinary Fourth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on December 31, 1939.

RED SOLDIERS AND THEIR ARMS 2.

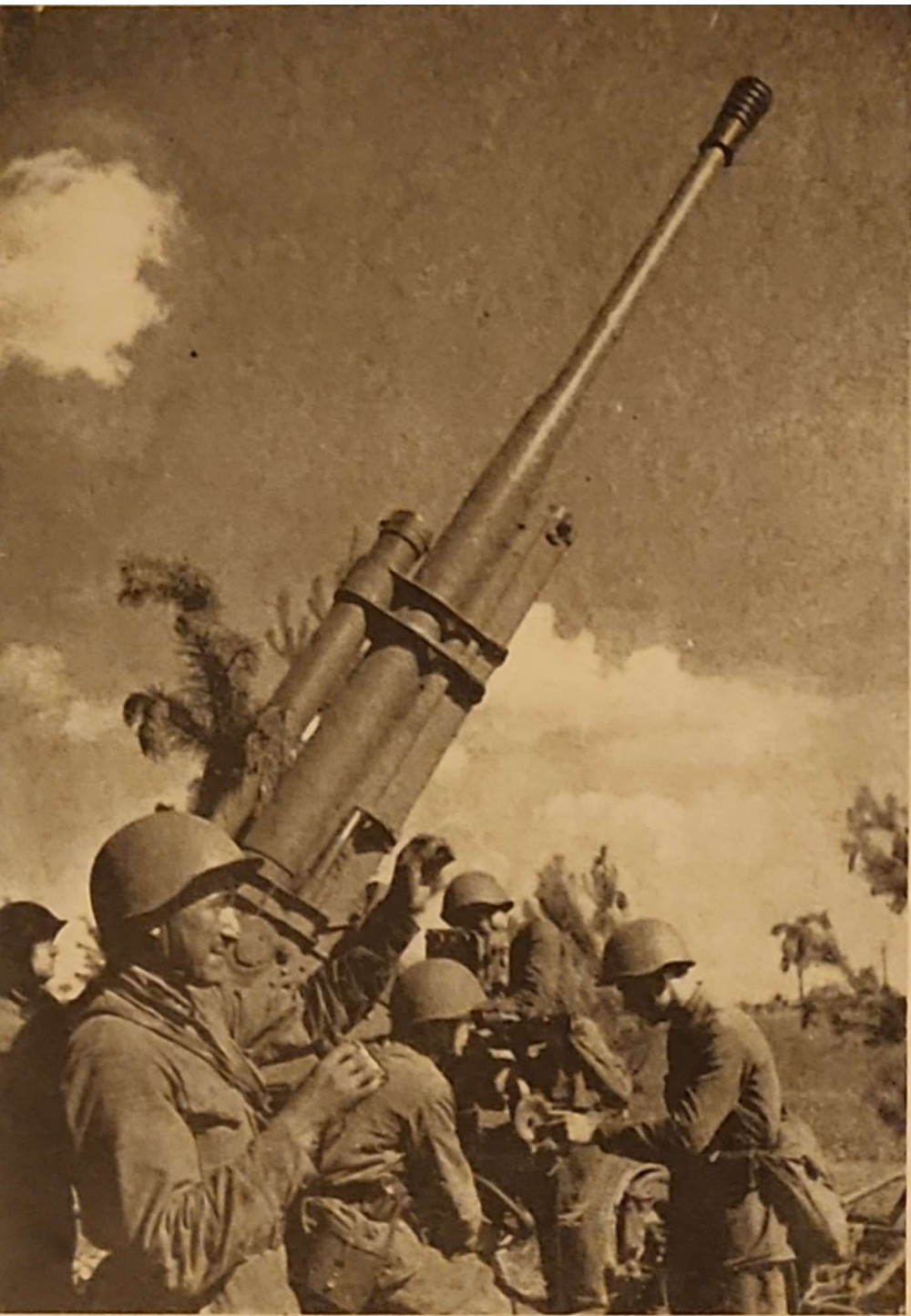


As a result of the Five Year Plans, the country had created a mighty industry, and with it a great war industry which produced every modern armament. The Red Army could now be rearmed. At the same



time the organisation of the Red Army was improved, the training of commanders undertaken on a large scale and in conformity with the experiences of the world war and the civil war.





RED SOLDIERS AND

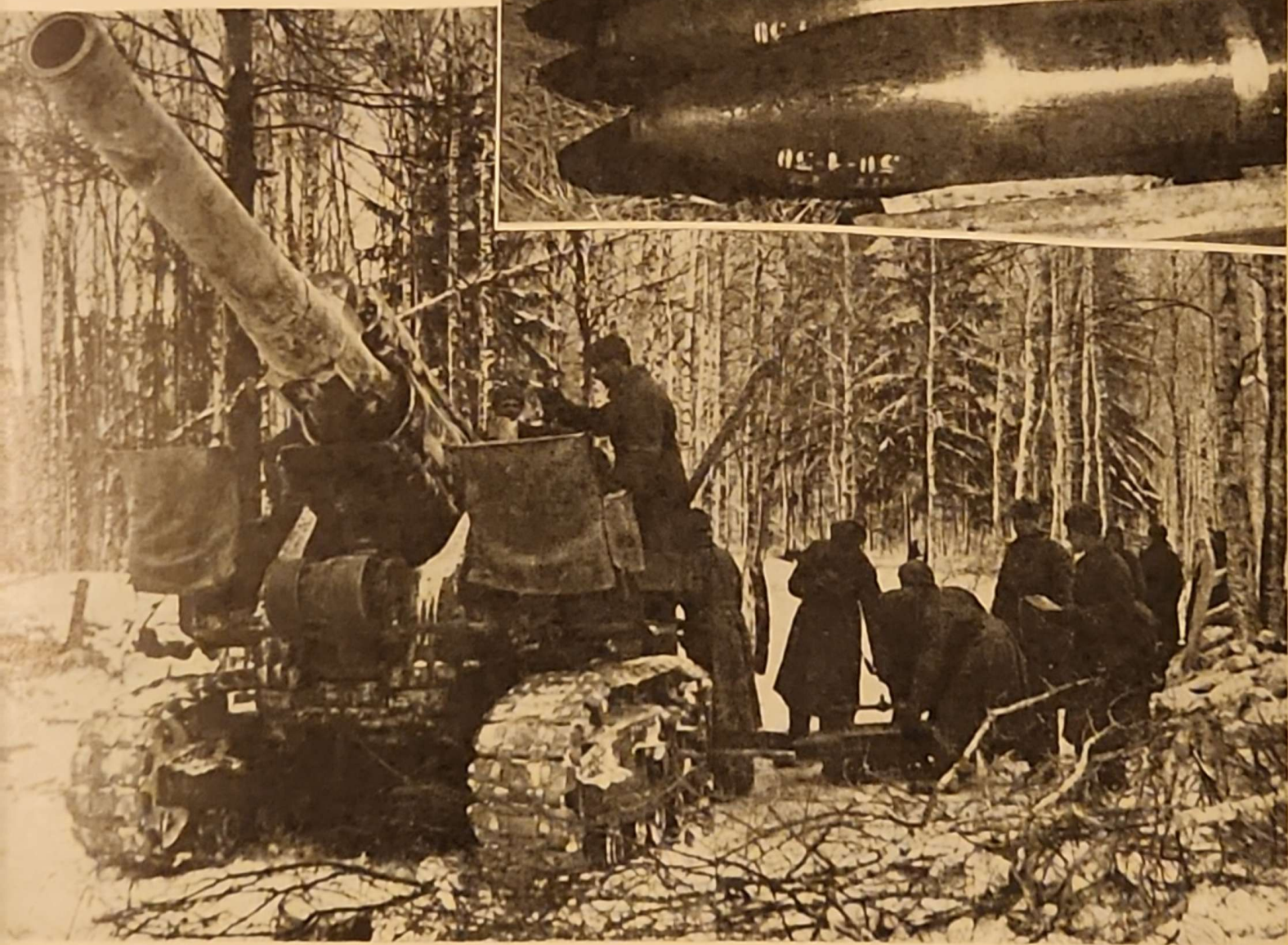
As a result of all these measures, the Red Army overcame its deficiencies and was transformed into a modern mechanised army. It showed a high fighting efficiency in the Far East, as also in the campaigns for the liberation of Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine and later in the war against Finland in 1939-40.



THEIR ARMS

3.

In the winter of 1939-40 units of the Red Army and Red Navy successfully broke through the so-called "Mannerheim Line" on the Karelian Isthmus, a line of fortifications regarded as impregnable by all European military experts. The Finnish army was routed and the Red Army enabled to strengthen the defences of the North-West frontier of the Soviet Union.





RED
SOLDIERS
AND
THEIR
ARMS

4.



MORTARS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART.



ANTI-TANK DEFENCE.

CHAPTER II

THE EPIC OF TODAY

I. THE FIRST PERIOD

On June 22nd, 1941, the Hitlerite bandits embarked on a war of extermination against the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

The aim pursued by the "Fuehrer" and his satellites in this war was the seizure of our territory, of our factories, of our grain, of our oil, of our metals and all other riches of the Soviet Union, created by the long and patient labour of the Soviet people. Having robbed us of all this wealth, the rulers of Nazi Germany intended to throw all their forces against the peoples of Britain and the U.S.A.

The German invaders wanted to deprive the peoples of the Soviet Union of their national existence and destroy their national culture.

What the Fascist monster wanted was to exterminate a considerable section of our people, Germanise the survivors and turn them into slaves of the German financiers, industrialists and landlords.

In order to achieve this, the Germans heaped up great masses of mechanical weapons and mobilised huge bodies of troops. For this purpose they made use of armaments seized by them in the conquered European countries. They threw against us 170 of their best picked divisions, which had previously been concentrated near our frontiers in preparation for a sudden onslaught.

In the first period of the war the German army enjoyed certain military advantages.

While the people of our country were engaged in peaceful creative labour, the Hitlerites were concentrating their troops on our frontiers and arming them to the teeth. These troops were on a full war footing and were waiting for orders to invade our territory. The German army had long been fully mobilised and possessed almost two years of experience in modern mechanised warfare. The Red Army was not only not mobilised, but still remained in many respects on a "territorial" footing.

The German army had numerical superiority in aircraft and especially in tanks.

The industries of Germany and of the occupied countries had long been put on a war footing.

The non-existence of a Second Front in Europe gave the German-Fascist invaders freedom to use their own best troops and those of their "allies" against our country. The enemy threw against us an army twice as large as the army the Russians had to face in 1914-18.

Finally, the treacherous surprise of the attack secured the initiative for the Germans and permitted them to determine the course of operations in the first period of the war.

All these circumstances created a favourable position for the Germans and an unfavourable one for the Red Army and could not of course, fail to affect the course of military operations.

The position created at the fronts in the first days of the war was characterised by Stalin in his speech on November 6th, 1942, in these words:—

"I think that no other country and no other army could have withstood such an onslaught of the bestial bands of the German-Fascist brigands and their allies. Only our Soviet country and only our Red Army are capable of withstanding such an onslaught. And not only withstanding it, but overpowering it."

In the first period of the war the Red Army was forced to retreat after suffering temporary reverses under the pressure of the numerical superiority of the enemy. This period is characterised by the fact that the Red Army was still in process of mobilisation. It was preparing and rallying its forces for a blow at the enemy, was acquiring experience in order to conduct major operations, and was levelling down the temporary initial superiority of the German army. For the Red Army this was a period of active defence.

As our President, Kalinin, has said:

"The Red Army's defence was an active defence. In all their operations our troops followed the principal rule of the Soviet Command—exhaust the enemy's strength to the limit and inflict the heaviest possible losses. During the retreat our army coped with this task more brilliantly than in any past war.

"The Germans were expecting an easy walk-over. They thought they would be able to plunder the Soviet territories with impunity and by sending home their loot, bring relief to their own hungry hinterland. But instead of all this they came up against the determined resistance of the Red Army, met with tremendous difficulties and suffered enormous losses."

The heroic resistance which the Red Army opposed to the advancing enemy was such as the Germans had never met before. They felt its force from the very first days of the war as they themselves were compelled to admit. Characteristic in this respect is a document issued on July 8th, 1941, by the command of the 45th German infantry division and seized by our forces eleven months later. This document, headed "Battle Report on the taking of Brest-Litovsk," bears witness to the fact that despite the numerical weakness of our garrison, despite the concentration of considerable forces by the Germans at this point, they were compelled to fight a bloody battle for nine days and suffer considerable losses before they succeeded in seizing the place. For the seizure of Brest, the 45th division had added to its effectives of 9 light and 3 heavy batteries a further force consisting of the 27th artillery regiment, 9 howitzers and heavy trench mortars, and was also supported by the fire of the mortar divisions of the 34th army corps and of three divisions of the 12th army corps.

But even this massed fire-power could not subdue the defenders of the town. According to the report, the German infantry, when it went in to attack "was cut off or blocked by Russian nests of resistance. . . . A passing battery of siege guns, which the commander of the 135th regiment took under his command on his own initiative in the early afternoon,



RADIO OPERATORS IN THE FIELD.



A FIELD SURGERY AT WORK.

made no impression whatever on the Russians. Nor did the throwing into battle of the fresh forces of the 133rd regiment, until then in reserve, against the southern and western islands, effect any change in the situation. . . ."

The first attacks of the Germans were repulsed, and the Germans suffered great losses. The second day the Hitlerites directed ". . . a withering fire from heavy guns" against the Red Army garrison, but even this was no use. Then the Germans tried to persuade the Soviet warriors to surrender. They brought up their "radioagitmachines" and "began to explain to the Russians all the hopelessness of their resistance and called on them to surrender." Instead of capitulating, however, the Soviet forces made vigorous sallies, and lively artillery and rifle fire drowned the voice of the Fascist loudspeaker.

"It became clear," says the report, "that the Russians were prepared to fight on and rejected any suggestion of surrender."

The battle for the town went on for another week. The Germans brought every kind of weapon into action.

"From 8 o'clock our aircraft dropped many 1,000 lb. bombs, but no results could be observed. Nor was the further lively bombardment of the eastern front by tanks and siege artillery any more successful although the walls were seen to be pierced in several places. In the afternoon our aviation again began to drop 1,000 lb. bombs and also one 1,600 lb. bomb, which fell on a corner of the fortress wall and shook the whole town with its explosion.

"On the thirtieth we prepared an attack with petrol, oil and grease, bringing it up in barrels and bottles to the trenches surrounding the fort, to be set alight with hand-grenades and incendiary bullets."

The Soviet warriors held on grimly, defending every inch of ground. Only when the fort was reduced to a heap of ruins and its further defence became inexpedient, did the heroic garrison abandon the town and fight their way out of the German encirclement.

"The Russians in Brest-Litovsk," says the report, "fought with exceptional stubbornness, their infantry manifested excellent training and considerable determination."

Such is the story of the struggle for a Soviet frontier town. The Germans thought it would be an easy prey, but it cost them thousands of officers and men. The Fascist invaders, accustomed to easy victories in the West, were amazed at the courage of the Red Army. They were forced to admit that a "stunning attack on a fortress occupied by an audacious opponent costs a lot of blood." This plain truth was confirmed in the taking of Brest-Litovsk.

This was what happened at Brest in the first days of the war. The same happened on all sectors of the Soviet-German front. The Hitlerite blackguards promised themselves a lightning, rapid rush of panzers across the wide Soviet plains. But the Red Army compelled them to mark time for weeks and months on end in front of and inside single towns.

Deep in the heart of every Soviet citizen and every warrior of the Red Army are graven the words spoken by Stalin on July 3rd, 1941: "The Red Army, the Red Navy and all citizens of the Soviet Union must defend every inch of Soviet soil, they must fight to their last breath for our towns and villages, must display the daring, initiative and intelligence that are inherent in our people."

No one has forgotten the days of stubborn battles for Smolensk, Luga, Velikie Luki, and Dniepropetrovsk, where the German hordes were held up by the Red Army and suffered tremendous losses. The memory of the heroic defence of Odessa, Sevastopol, Leningrad, Moscow, Tula, will live for ever.

For over ten weeks our Red Army defended Odessa with matchless courage. The enemy had thrown tremendous forces against the Soviet city—18 picked German and Rumanian divisions. Units of the Red Army defending Odessa completely destroyed two Rumanian divisions and inflicted tremendous losses in men and materials on the rest. The total losses of the enemy in the battle for Odessa were a quarter of a million officers and men killed, wounded, or captured. The enemy divisions, which were reinforced two or three times, were roughly handled and bled white.

After the units of the Red Army had completed their task, Odessa was evacuated, but the determined defence of Odessa had a considerable influence on the course of military operations on the whole southern front. The stubborn and determined defence of Odessa was a model of the high virtues of our Red Army, of its courage, daring and skill.



A WOMAN GUERILLA FIGHTER, AWARDED THE ORDER OF THE RED STAR.



AN ARMoured TRAIN, 1918



... AND NOW.

The defence of Sevastopol, which lasted 250 days, also played a tremendous part in determining the course of the war, and influencing the further training and improvement of the Red Army. On the Sevastopol front the enemy had a tremendous numerical superiority both in men and machines. It will be sufficient to say that the Germans had five times as many guns, fifteen times as many tanks, and seventeen times as many aeroplanes as we. The Germans threw more than 1,000 aeroplanes against Sevastopol. The extent of artillery bombardment and air raids can be judged by the fact that the average weight of metal dropped by the Germans on each square yard of our defence zone was about a ton and a half.

The Germans enjoyed a further great advantage at Sevastopol. They succeeded in completely cutting off the city from the land side. Hence the Red Army could receive supplies of weapons, munitions and food only by sea, over a route exposed to constant air attack, while the Germans brought up reinforcements in men and machines by land.

And yet, despite all these advantages, the enemy was forced to besiege Sevastopol for eight months. These eight months did more than cause a loss of time to the Germans, and upset the German strategic schedule. In the eight months of the Sevastopol defence the Red Army also inflicted tremendous losses on the enemy. The Fascist invaders lost 300,000 officers and men killed and wounded at Sevastopol.

A decisive influence on the whole first period of the war was exercised by the defence of Leningrad and Moscow.

It is well known that according to the original plan of the Hitlerite invaders, Leningrad was one of the cities the seizure of which was expected to bring the Soviet Union to its knees and end the war. The enemy concentrated tremendous forces at Leningrad, but all the fierce attacks of the Hitlerites were repulsed and they failed to take Leningrad by storm. So the Germans sat down to a siege, hoping to take the city by attrition. They surrounded the city and subjected it to a constant artillery and air bombardment. But nothing could break the will and the courage of the Soviet fighters, and "fighters" meant practically the entire population of Leningrad.

The blockade of Leningrad lasted seventeen months. During this period the Germans lost a tremendous number of men and machines. In one period of twenty-two days 170,000 German officers and men were killed at Leningrad, and about 500 tanks and as many guns destroyed. In all, the Germans lost in the battle for Leningrad more than a quarter of a million German, Finnish and other Hitlerite officers and men in killed alone, together with a vast quantity of machines.

On January 18th, 1943, the troops of the Leningrad and Volkhov fronts broke the enemy ring.

The siege of Leningrad was raised despite the fact that the Germans had turned their positions on the approaches to the city into a strongly fortified zone with an intricate system of pillboxes and other prepared positions and many anti-tank and anti-infantry obstacles.

As is well known, the strategic plans of Hitler for 1941 and 1942 centred around the taking of Moscow. In 1941 the main blows of the German-Fascist hordes were directed towards Moscow, which they tried to take by frontal attack, creating one of their famous pincers which were to close and surround the heart of our country, the capital of the Soviet Union. In the autumn of 1941 the Germans threw a tremendous force against Moscow, consisting of thirty-three infantry divisions, 13 armoured divisions and 3 motorised divisions. Air support for the advancing German forces was provided by the Second Air Fleet of the Luftwaffe, brought here for the purpose.

However, all the efforts of the enemy proved vain. In the struggle for Moscow the Red Army won the greatest victory of the whole 1941 campaign. The base for this victory was Stalin's plan for the annihilation of the German troops near Moscow. The plan consisted in exhausting the enemy and bleeding him white by the stubborn resistance of the Red Army on the outer and inner approaches to Moscow; in creating a system of defence positions in the Moscow sector; in forming strong strategic reserves and concentrating them in good time in the direction of the main blows of the Red Army on the central front; in the correct timing both of these blows and of the counter-offensive.

Up to December 6th, 1941, the Red Army fought a fierce defensive battle against the German shock troops advancing from the flanks and against their auxiliaries. In the course of this battle the Germans suffered considerable losses. Between November 16th and December 6th, 1941, the enemy lost in killed alone 55,170 men. Our troops (not counting the air force) destroyed 777 enemy tanks, 178 guns, 534 motor vehicles, 119 trench mortars, 224 machine guns.

The initiative now passed to the Red Army. Our offensive began on various fronts. A turning-point was reached in the war. The temporary military superiority of the Germans was at an end. The fate of the war began to be determined by permanently effective factors. The German-Fascist army was faced with a catastrophe.

In the first period of the war the Red Army, in fulfilment of Stalin's plan of active defence, learnt not only successfully to carry out decisive operations but also to strike crushing blows at the enemy. The defence of our cities played an important part in this. It was the first stumbling-block for the German armies, it upset all the calculations of the Hitlerites who had planned to finish the war in 1941. It forced them to work out new plans in circumstances which no longer gave them the necessary military superiority and after the German army had lost the best part of its picked front line troops.

The defence of the Soviet cities upset the German plans, which had provided for the dismemberment of the Red Army by one mighty blow, thus depriving it of its character as a united military organism. When they were waging war in France, the German Fascists had met with no serious resistance after breaking through the so-called Weygand line. The leaders lost control over the army. But in the war against the Soviet Union, the Hitlerites were facing an army consistently led, and using new operational methods to frustrate the intentions of the enemy.

II. THE SECOND PERIOD.

The second period of the war starts with the first liberation of Soviet territory from the Fascist invasion.

The offensive of the Red Army, begun at Rostov, was continued during the whole winter of 1942. The Hitlerites did their best to stop this offensive. In order to cover up the inglorious failure of their plan to seize Moscow and subjugate the Soviet Union, in order to reassure the German population and encourage the army, the Hitlerite propagandists began to explain that they were not retreating, but only "straightening their line." They put the blame for their defeat on the difficult conditions of the Russian winter, as if the same conditions did not exist for the Red Army. At the same time the Hitlerite invaders expected to occupy new defensive positions, and thence prepare for a so-called "spring" offensive.

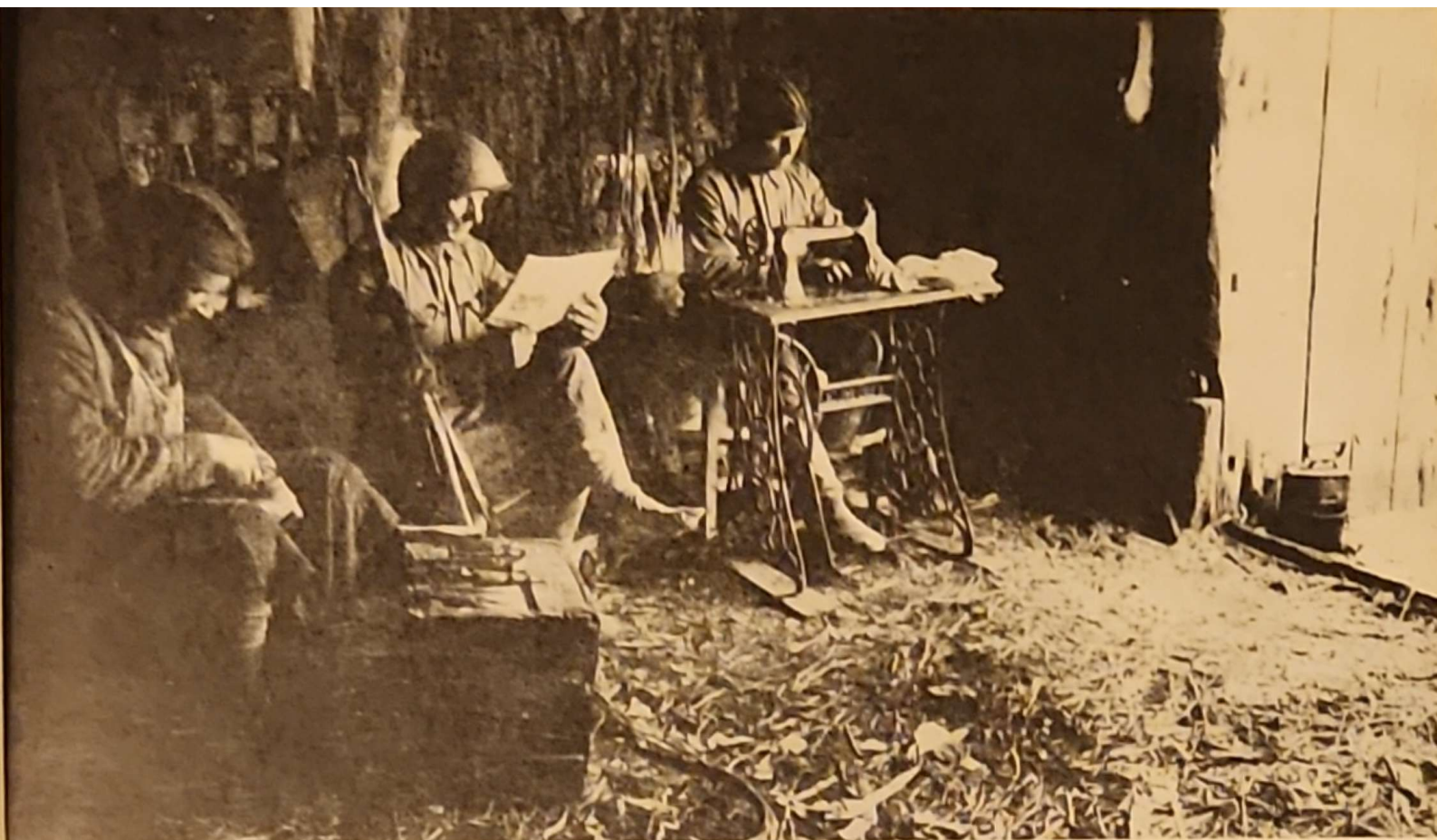
However, the Red Army again upset the plans of the Hitlerites. The Red Army continued its offensive throughout the winter, continually pushing the Germans back towards the west, dealing them ever fresh blows and inflicting heavy losses. The Red Army thus forced the German command to make premature use of its so-called, "spring reserves." The Hitlerites began hurriedly to throw in their fresh reserve divisions. About thirty such divisions, kept in readiness for the spring, were transferred to the eastern front from Germany and the occupied territories. But even this did not help. All attempts made by the Germans to snatch the initiative from the Red Army failed pitifully and the Red Army retained the initiative, broke into the defence positions of the German troops and in certain sectors wedged itself deeply into their line.

As a result of the winter offensive of 1941-42, the Red Army cleared the German Fascist invaders from a considerable part of the territory they had occupied, liberating more than 11,000 localities, among them about 60 towns and 25 large railway centres.

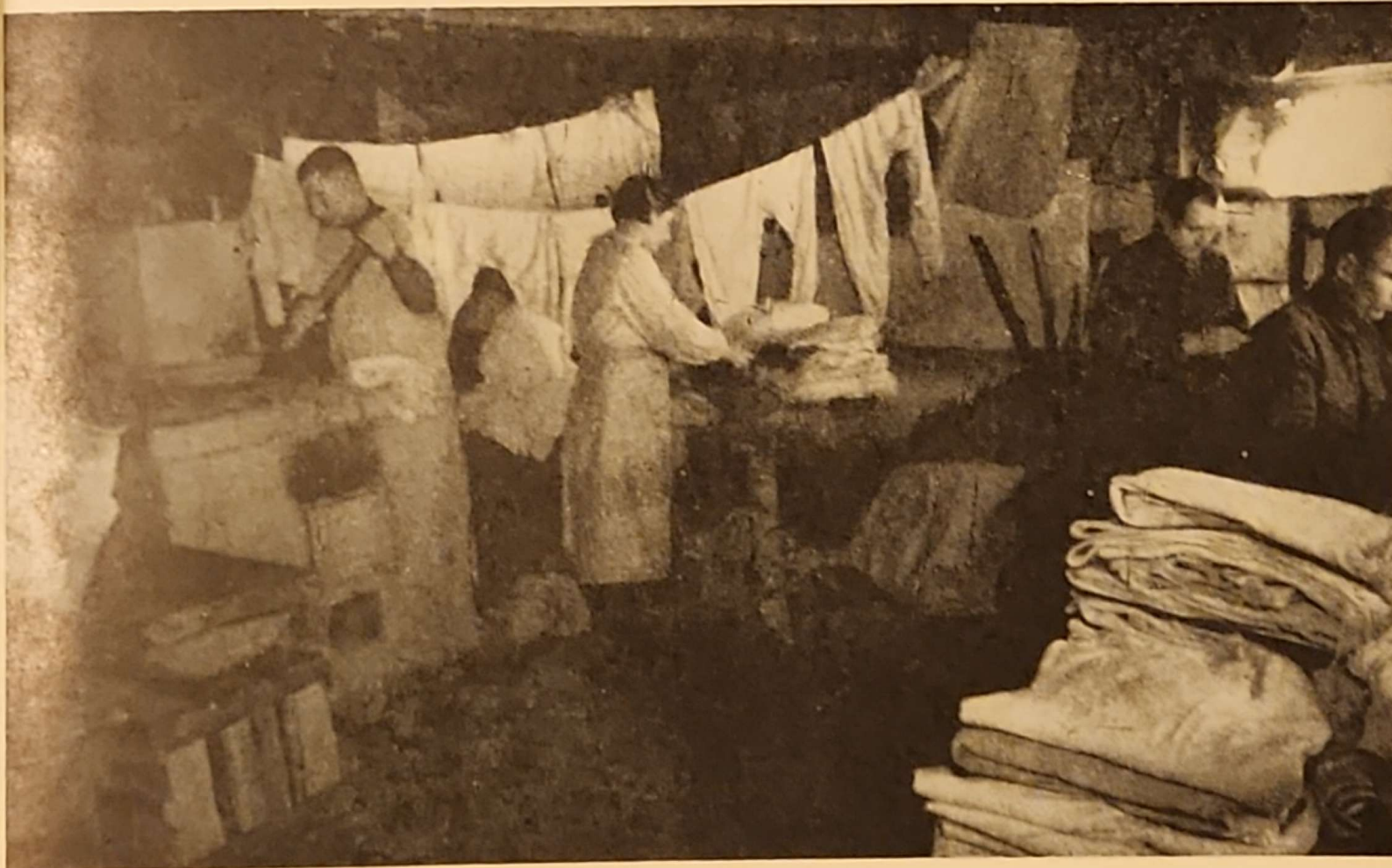
The winter offensive of the Red Army and especially its successful operations in the areas of Rostov, Tula, Kaluga, Moscow, Tikhvin and Leningrad revealed two significant facts. They showed firstly that the Red Army and its combatant cadres had grown into an effective force capable not only of withstanding the onslaught of the German troops, but also of defeating them in open battle and driving them back. They showed, secondly, that the German troops had serious organic defects which, given certain favourable conditions for the Red Army, could lead to the defeat of the German troops. (Stalin, November 6th, 1942.)

The winter offensive of the Red Army transformed the balance of forces on the Soviet-German front. The German army was much weaker than it had been at the beginning of the war. It had suffered tremendous losses in its basic cadres of officers and men and had lost the temporary military advantages resulting from the suddenness of its attack.

Our Red Army, on the other hand, had grown stronger and was better organised than at the beginning of the war. Its officers were steeled in battle, its generals had gained in experience and judgment, its men had learned to hate the German Fascist invaders and convinced themselves from their own experience that the so-called "bravery" of the German officers was a relative quantity. On the whole, the Red Army acquired a great deal of experience, and was developing more and more from a territorial into a regular army.



COBBLER AND TAILOR ARE ON THE JOB.
IN THE FRONT LINE I.



WOMEN ASSIST IN THE FRONT LINE LAUNDRY.



IN
THE
FRONT
LINE
2.

THE DENTAL DUGOUT.



THE BARBER'S DUGOUT.



IN A FRONT LINE REST ROOM.



THE FAMOUS MUSICIAN, PROFESSOR PAUL KICHENKO, PLAYS AT THE FRONT.



MORNING ABLUTIONS.



A BATTERY'S WALL-NEWSPAPER.

IN THE FRONT LINE. 3.



THE FOURTH GUARDS DIVISION WINS A BANNER FOR EXEMPLARY WORK.

However, it still lacked the skill required for the full use against the enemy of all the splendid weapons and equipment which the country put at its disposal. In the course of the summer and autumn of 1942, which were spent in more unremitting and fierce struggles, the Red Army coped with the task of learning to handle its weapons, of mastering the art of leading troops and of acquiring the skill needed to beat the enemy.

III. THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE.

Although the German army had been considerably weakened during the winter of 1941-42, it could still dispose of very strong forces. Furthermore, the German high command, having learnt its lesson during the winter, now took measures to tighten up any weakening in discipline, and to strengthen the organisation of its units.

Making good use of the absence of a Second Front in Europe, the invaders concentrated considerable forces for a new attack on the Red Army. True, the Germans could now no longer attack along the whole front. The offensive began in the south-west, where the enemy succeeded in creating a considerable superiority of forces, which put them in a position to break through our defences.

The Hitlerite high command wanted to seize Stalingrad, then Saratov and Kuibyshev, cut off Moscow from the south, from the Volga and from the Urals, outflank the city from the east, surround it and finally take it. At the same time the Hitlerites counted on seizing the Don, the Kuban, and the Caucasus with its oil wells. They assumed that this secondary venture would weaken the defence of Moscow and facilitate the conquest of that city, as this move would compel the command of the Red Army to divert forces from the capital to the south.

The enemy succeeded in seizing Rostov-on-Don, Voroshilovgrad, Krasnodar, the Don and Kuban Regions and in advancing to the foothills of the Caucasus and to Stalingrad. A serious menace hung over the Soviet Republic and hard days of heavy defensive battles were in store for the Red Army.

"Not a step backward! Stop the enemy and bleed him white until later you can smash him completely!"—such were in those days the orders of the country.

For four months—August, September, October and November, 1942, the attention of the world was focussed on the battle for Stalingrad.

The Hitlerites understood that a defeat of the German army at Stalingrad would be the beginning of the end. They scraped together all their reserves and threw them in at Stalingrad, creating a considerable numerical superiority. But they could not take Stalingrad.

What was it that decided the outcome of this struggle? One decisive factor was the high morale of the Soviet people and of the Red Army, their firm determination to defend Stalingrad to their last breath, to exhaust the enemy and bleed him white and then strike a smashing blow at him. The order of the mother-country, "Not a step backward!" was the order of battle for all the defenders of Stalingrad, inspiring them to deeds of mass heroism, iron stubbornness, courage and daring.

The other decisive factor was the increasing skill of the Red Army in the art of waging war.

Clear proof of this are the experiences of the 62nd Army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Chuikov.

This army arrived to defend Stalingrad at a time when a thin chain of our troops was the only obstacle barring the way into Stalingrad. In such circumstances flexibility and manoeuvring ability were of decisive importance. Nothing else could save the situation. The 62nd Army manifested a truly amazing "lightning" capacity for manoeuvring, and gave a brilliant example of skill in warfare. The army command and the commanders of the various subordinate units rapidly dispersed their regiments and battalions along the front and were not afraid to withdraw troops and transfer them to where they were more needed at any given time.

Thanks to skilful manoeuvring, thanks to the ability of our commanders to deploy their troops in conformity with the requirements of the developing battle, the Germans, who had thought they could take Stalingrad in their stride, were suddenly forced to call a halt.

Having occupied its positions, the 62nd Army never retreated. "Our army does not go backwards," said the men of the 62nd Army, who nicknamed their commander General Stubborn. This peculiarity of the 62nd Army—stubbornness—is the second source of that strength which stopped the advance of the German troops. And if the Germans did succeed in gaining ground here and there, it was only at the cost of enormous losses and only over the dead bodies of the heroic defenders. The slogan "Not a step backward!" became



MOUNTED PATROLS.



the law governing the actions of the men and commanders of the 62nd Army. They were determined to die rather than give ground, rather than give up to the enemy the city which bears the name of our great leader.

The high morale of the 62nd Army found expression in unmatched deeds of heroism. The whole country has heard of the unprecedented courage of four armour-busters of the 62nd, Peter Boloto, Aleinikov, Samoilov and Velikov, who won a standing fight with thirty German tanks. The whole world has heard of the prowess of the thirty-three men of the 62nd Army, who took on and defeated seventy German tanks.

"Please tell Stalin from us that for us commanders and men of the 62nd Army there is no land beyond the Volga. Here we stand and here we remain until death," said Vassili Zaitsev when he was given the decoration awarded him by the Government. In these simple words, coming straight from the heart of a Soviet citizen, this brave fighter expressed the thoughts of all the heroic defenders of Stalingrad.

The strength of the 62nd Army did not, however, consist merely in its adaptability and firmness. The army also showed exceptional skill in the defence of the city, a fine example of active defence. Not only did it beat back all attacks of the enemy, but counter-attacked incessantly, forced the enemy onto the defensive and wrested the initiative from him. In the course of the battle for Stalingrad the units of the 62nd Army developed to a fine art the defence of single buildings or even single floors of buildings, of half-collapsed walls, rooms, and even of stairs, using for this purpose every sort of weapon. By its remarkable performance, the 62nd Army created a sort of university for the study of street fighting, despite the fact that its effectives included many volunteer formations consisting of Stalingrad workers who had never had any special training in the military defence of urban streets and houses. But these engineers, blacksmiths and carpenters were true sons of the Soviet regime. They had excellent fighting qualities: Initiative, courage, daring, hatred of the enemy, determination to win at all costs. Where men possess these qualities all difficulties and obstacles can be overcome and victory won. The example of the Stalingrad workers who joined the 62nd Army inspired all the fighting men in it, strengthened the whole army, and welded it into one monolithic fighting machine.

The battle for Stalingrad was a turning-point in the course of the war. The Germans had concentrated considerable forces against Stalingrad and threw in all their reserves on this point. They also suffered the greatest defeat of this war and of all previous wars. The heroic defence of Stalingrad gained for the Red Army the time required to prepare an offensive on a broad front. This offensive began on November 19th, 1942, first in the Stalingrad region, then in the region of the northern Don, in the Northern Caucasus, later spreading to the Central, Voronezh, Leningrad and Volkhov fronts.

The story from this point has been told by Schwernik, delegate of the Soviet Trade Unions to the British Trades Union Congress, as follows:—

"As well as defeating the Germans in the south, the Soviet troops in the winter of 1942-43 broke the blockade of Leningrad in the south, and drove the enemy from districts of very great military importance—Kursk, Rzhev, Vyazma, Gzhask, Velikie-Luki, Demyansk. The Red Army's winter campaign left Hitler's military machine cracked and shaken.

"Hitler was forced to make desperate efforts to prevent catastrophe from overtaking his army. Taking advantage of the absence of the second front in the continent of Europe, Hitler moved over 30 divisions from western Europe to the Kharkov area to support his battered troops, and by doing this he saved himself from disaster.

"Hitler wanted, with the aid of these fresh divisions, to encircle and annihilate the Soviet troops in the Kharkov area, to avenge Stalingrad, and to turn the course of events in his favour. These attempts of the German High Command were disrupted by the foresight of the Soviet Supreme Command and the heroism of the men and officers of the Red Army.

"The winter campaign of 1942/3, thanks to the brilliant successes of the Red Army, became the turning point in the whole course of the war. It vividly demonstrated the changing balance of forces on the Soviet-German front.

"And whatever Hitler does, whatever 'total mobilisation' he carries out, he will never be able to fill the gaps torn in his bandit armies on the Soviet-German front. In two years of war, Hitlerite Germany and her accomplices lost on the Soviet-German front 6,400,000 soldiers and officers killed and captured, 56,500 guns of all calibres, 42,400 tanks and 43,000 planes.

"The enemy's summer offensive of 1943, in which he placed enormous hopes, also failed. On the eve of this offensive Hitler wrote in an Order of the Day: 'The German Army is going over to a general offensive on the Eastern Front,' that the blow which the German troops will inflict 'must be decisive, and become a turning point in the war,' and that 'this is the last battle for the German victory.'

"On July 5th, large forces of German-Fascist tanks and infantry, supported by many planes, went over to the offensive in the Orel-Kursk and Byelgorod-Kursk direction. The Germans hurled into this offensive 38 picked divisions, of which 17 were tank divisions, 3 motor divisions and 18 infantry divisions. These forces were concentrated on narrow sectors of the front. The German Command calculated on breaking through our defence by concentric blows, encircling and destroying our troops assembled in the Kursk area.

"But the new German offensive did not take the Soviet troops by surprise. They were prepared not only to repulse the German attack, but to inflict mighty counter-blows. The Germans, during this offensive, did not gain any important successes. At the price of great losses, they succeeded only in driving a wedge into our defence. Having exhausted the picked German divisions and bled them white, the Red Army's subsequent decisive counter-blows threw the enemy back. On July 23 the Soviet troops successfully liquidated the Germans' July offensive. They are now continuing their own offensive, cleansing Soviet towns and villages of the German filth, liberating from Fascist tyranny Soviet citizens emancipated through hunger and forced labour, and robbed of their last stitch.

"On August 5th, that is to say, a month after the opening of the German offensive, the Soviet troops cleared the German-Fascist invaders from Orel and Byelgorod. On August 23, that is to say, a month after the liquidation of the German summer offensive, the valiant Soviet troops liberated the second capital of the Ukraine, the town of Kharkov. Taganrog, Sumy, Merefa, Gorlovka, Artemovsk and a number of other towns were liberated from the German invaders. . . .

"In the course of two months of the summer offensive, from July 5th to September 5th, the Soviet troops on all sectors of the front destroyed 5,729 planes, 8,400 tanks, 5,192 guns and over 28,000 motor vehicles."

Since that time the Red Army's offensive has continued almost without interruption. Names of towns not mentioned in the news since 1941 have again appeared. Kirov, Dnepropetrovsk, Krivoi Rog, have added glorious pages to the history of the Red Army. Perekop, again, as in the war of twenty-three years ago, has closed the enemy's gate to the Crimea. The offensive goes on.

CHAPTER III

THE SOURCE OF OUR STRENGTH; THE SOVIET WAY OF LIFE

I. A NEW SOCIAL SYSTEM

What had been clear to the Soviet people from the first day of the war has now become obvious to the whole world: The Hitlerite brigands badly overreached themselves when they prepared their attack on the Soviet Union. Their heads turned by the easy victories on the European continent, they grossly over-estimated their own strength and under-estimated the real power of the Red Army.

Where, then, lies this power of the Red Army? What are its sources? What are the foundations of the military might of the Soviet Union, which has frustrated all the plans and calculations of Hitler?

The main source of the power of the Red Army is, above all, the strength and stability of the Soviet way of life.

"Never will a people be defeated whose workers and peasants have in their majority seen, felt and known that they were defending their own Soviet power, the power of the workers; that they were defending a cause the victory of which would ensure for them and for their children the opportunity to enjoy all the blessings of civilisation, all the creations of human labour."—Lenin wrote these words twenty-five years ago.

In twenty-five years Soviet power has radically transformed the country. The old poverty-ridden Russia has changed into a mighty flourishing country, with a first-rate industry, with the largest-scale agriculture in the world, with the most widespread science and culture. In our country there is no more exploitation of man by man, there are no more economic crises, no more unemployment. The basic conditions for a life of plenty have been created for all.

This bald statement may seem fantastic to many a reader who has no personal knowledge of the working of the Soviet system. However, the following statements of fact from the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. may make the position clearer:



A STUDY IN CAMOUFLAGE.
WINTER WARFARE I.



CRAWLING ON SKIS.



WINTER WARFARE 2.







WINTER WARFARE

3.





UP COMES THE DINNER . . . IT'S GOOD !

"The land, mineral deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, railways, water and air transport, banks, means of communication, large state-organised agricultural enterprises such as state farms, machine and tractor stations and the like, as well as municipal enterprises and the principal dwelling house properties in the cities and industrial localities are state property, that is, the property of the whole people." (Article 6.) "The economic life of the U.S.S.R. is determined and directed by the state plan of national economy for the purpose of increasing the public wealth, of steadily raising the material and cultural level of the toilers, and of strengthening the independence of the U.S.S.R. and its power of defence." (Article 11.) "Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work, i.e., the right to guaranteed employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality. The right to work is ensured by the socialist organisation of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the preclusion of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment." (Article 118).

The Soviet way of life has radically changed the character of all the peoples of the Soviet Union. The feeling of mutual distrust, the result of centuries of propaganda, has disappeared and a feeling of mutual friendship has taken its place. A genuine fraternal co-operation now unites the peoples of the Soviet Union.

Men and women themselves have changed. In twenty-five years of Soviet rule our citizens have known the great joy of freedom and of creative labour. And every working citizen cherishes like a sacrament every inch of Soviet soil and everything created on it by our people in the course of its history.

The great achievements of the Soviet people are firmly anchored in the Stalin constitution. The Soviet way of life does not divide the people into active and passive citizens, nor does it recognise differences in the rights of men and women, of "nomads" and people of fixed abode, of "haves" and "have-nots," of the educated and the uneducated. In our country all citizens enjoy truly equal rights. In our country we have developed and strengthened a moral and political unity of the people which has no precedent in the history of the human race. The Soviet people is one great close-knit family.

This is why the treacherous attack of the Hitlerite brigands on the Soviet Union, the temporary setbacks of the Red Army and the loss of considerable territory in the first period of our patriotic war not only did not shake, but on the contrary greatly strengthened, the unity of the Soviet people, made them close their ranks and strengthened the force of our resistance.

The Soviet way of life has raised the cultural level and living standards of tens of millions of people, and brought to light hidden sources of energy, initiative, and creative faculties among the people which are the admiration of the world.

The fact that the number of school-children increased from eight millions in 1913 to thirty-five millions in 1940-1; of university students from 150,000 to 600,000; and of doctors, a two and one-third-fold increase in thirteen years, are proof of this.

The Soviet peoples are filled with a profound faith in their victory and this inspires the masses to prodigious feats of heroism, courage and self-sacrifice.

The history of the last few years proves that no other state would have been able to withstand the strain to which our country was subjected. But the Soviet order not only withstood the strain but grew stronger under it.

The first source of the strength of the Red Army lies in the nature of the Soviet order, in its strength and stability. A further source of the strength of the Red Army lies in the fact that it is waging a war of liberation, the most just of all wars, a holy patriotic war for a country whose whole territory is the property of the whole people.

The Germans are waging an unjust war of pillage. Their aim is to seize territories that do not belong to them. They strive to enslave and in part to exterminate whole nations. The Hitlerite bandits declare that it is their mission to introduce a "new order" in the conquered territories. But the whole world knows that this "new order" which the Germans introduced is nothing but the enslavement, impoverishment or destruction of millions of men, women and children. According to official statistics the Germans have already killed several million people in the European countries they have conquered. Millions of others are doomed by the Hitlerites to slavery and death.

That is why all decent people throughout the world have risen against the German invaders, regard them as their enemies and give their support to the Red Army as an army of liberation. And the longer the war lasts the more complete will be the isolation of Fascist Germany and her army and the greater the number of supporters of the Red Army.

More than 18 months ago Stalin wrote in an order to the Red Army :—

“ The Red Army’s task is to liberate our Soviet territory from the yoke of the German invaders ; to liberate from the Nazi yoke the residents of our towns and villages who, before the war, were free and lived like human beings and who are now oppressed and suffer pillage, ruin and famine ; and lastly, to liberate our women from the disgrace and outrage to which they are subjected by the German Fascist fiends. What could be a nobler or loftier task than this ?

“ No German soldier can say that he is waging a just war, because he cannot fail to see that he is forced to fight for the plundering and oppression of other people. The German soldier has no lofty, noble war aim which could inspire him and in which he could take pride.

“ Any Red Army man, on the other hand, can proudly say that he is waging a just war, a war of liberation, a war for the freedom and independence of his motherland. The Red Army pursues its noble and lofty war aim, which inspires it to heroic feats. This, properly speaking, explains why the patriotic war brings forward thousands of heroes and heroines in our country, who are ready to face death for the freedom of their motherland. This is the source of strength of the Red Army. This is the source of the weakness of the German Fascist army.”

With the slogan—“ Everything for the Front, Everything for Victory ”—Soviet patriots are working wonders. They are doing everything possible and impossible and are finding both the forces and the means to overcome the greatest difficulties in defence of their achievements. Soviet citizens are giving their all, everything they have, to help their country and their Red Army to win the war.

At the end of 1941 the workers of the Urals promised Stalin that they would work even more and give the front in 1942 double and treble the quantity of armaments they produced in 1941. By the end of the first six months of 1942 this promise was already fulfilled. Then the same workers decided to raise production in the second six months to $1\frac{1}{2}$ times or double what it was in the first six months. This undertaking was again fulfilled with plenty to spare.

The Urals, with their ore mines and foundries, have now been transformed into a mighty centre of mechanical engineering, and are playing a decisive part in the whole armament industry of the U.S.S.R. This is what the citizens of the Urals themselves say about the transformation of their country during the present war :—

“ Our industry and our agriculture have both been transformed. Our iron and non-ferrous foundries are turning out many new products for the front, e.g., tubes, sheet and rolled metal, which were never before made in the Urals. Our steel foundries have learned to make any kind of steel in ordinary Martin furnaces. Rare non-ferrous metals are being mined in our hills. In the past our chemical industry was limited to supplying raw materials, but now we are making finished products as well. New branches of industry have been established in our district and we are now making tanks, aircraft, motor vehicles and engines, plastics, cables, motor-cycles, all sorts of apparatus and equipment for war machines, and have also developed a rubber industry. Our builders have worked like Trojans. At a rapid wartime rate they have built hundreds of thousands of square yards of factory space. In 1942 our agriculture gave the Red Army and the industrial centres three times as many vegetables and twice as many potatoes as in 1941. The collective farmers of the Urals are also growing sugar beet, tobacco and rubber-bearing plants. The sowing and harvesting were carried out in a shorter time in 1942 than in 1941, despite all the difficulties of wartime.

“ When the Red Army men of the Urals return home from the front, they will hardly recognise their home districts.”

For 1944 the Ural workers have promised more victories on the production front. They have promised to fulfil all orders of the front within the terms required and to increase the production of armaments and munitions still further.

II. UNITY OF ARMY AND PEOPLE.

* * * * *

The army and the people constitute a single family in our country. The Red Army is a People’s Army in the true sense of the word. It was created by the people ; and in the fierce struggle now in progress it is defending the vital interests of the people with the greatest heroism. This is why our people love their Red Army so well and look after it with such tender care.

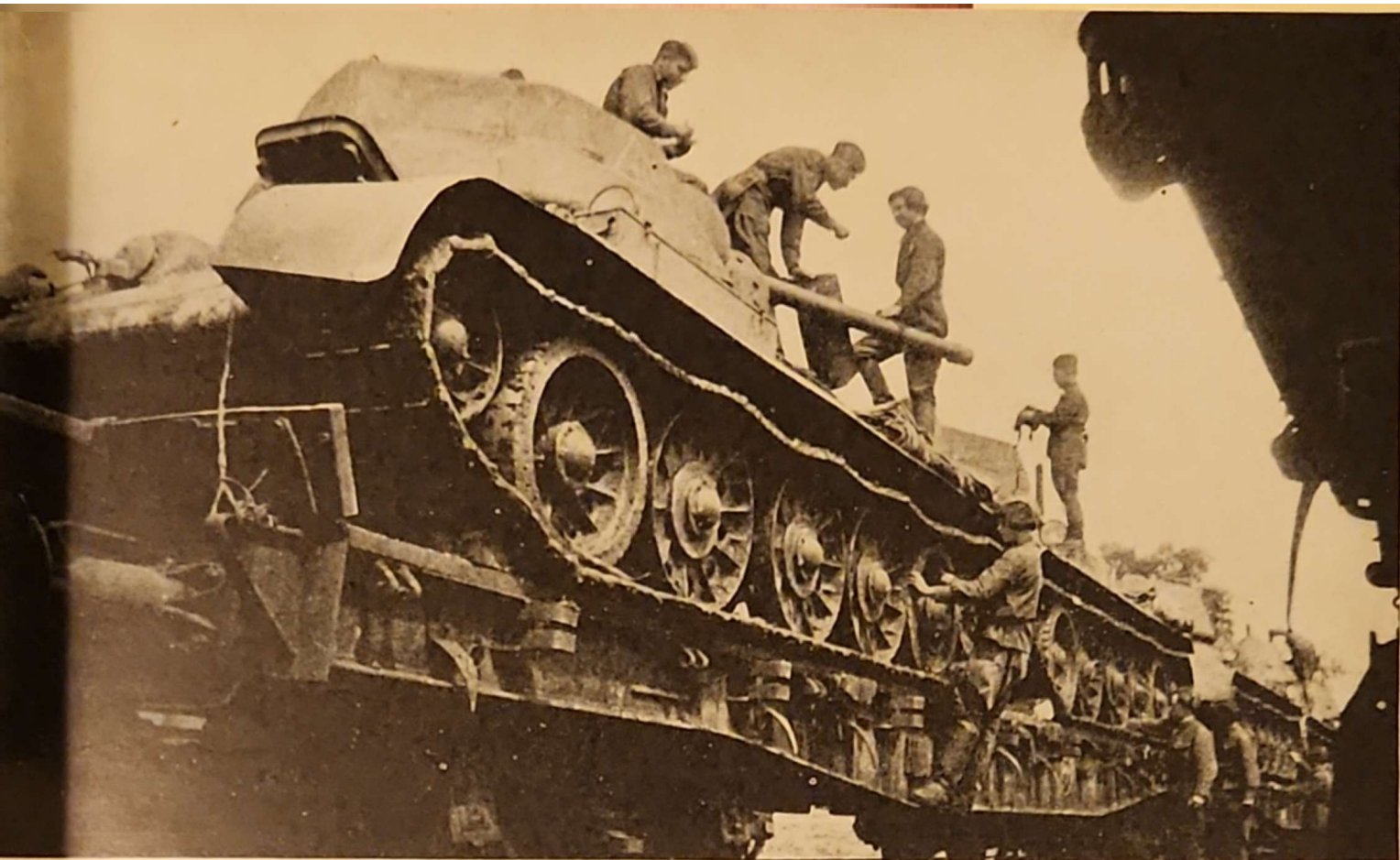


METAL—WOMEN DO THEIR BIT.

TANKS.



TANKS READY FOR DESPATCH.



WOMEN AID IN LOADING.



INTO ACTION.



TANKS IN ACTION.

This care is illustrated in particular in the attitude of the Government towards the question of pensions. Pensions for disabled soldiers are fixed according to their previous earnings: 100 per cent. of their earnings if totally disabled, and proportionately lower rates for lesser degrees of disablement. If a demobilised soldier works, then he receives his full rate of pension whatever his earnings may be.

The system of dependants' allowances in the Soviet Union is based on the capacity of dependants to work. The following count as dependants for allowance purposes: Children or brothers or sisters up to sixteen, or eighteen if students; father over sixty or mother over fifty-five; wife if incapable of working. No soldier's family can be evicted from their home, and it is the obligation of the local authority to guarantee to the family the necessary work, living accommodation, and general welfare. Much voluntary work is done by the trade unions, schoolchildren, and other social groups for assistance to the dependants of Red soldiers, in addition to the official State grants.

Before the Nazi attack, there were three categories of pay in force. First, the ordinary conscript, doing his military service, received pocket-money and no more. But cleaning and shaving equipment, cigarettes, and entertainment were available free of charge. Secondly, for those who decided to stay on in the Army as a full-time job, pay was adjusted to correspond roughly with what they would have received in civilian jobs of similar skill. Finally, in the case of men on the reserve, called up for further training, they received 50 per cent. of their normal wages from their place of work. Naturally, under war conditions, certain modifications have been made necessary.

Of some interest, incidentally, is the fact that all income-tax payers of military age in the U.S.S.R., but exempt from military service, have to pay double the normal rate of tax.

Our people have always loved and respected the Red Army, have always been concerned with improving its conditions and increasing its fighting efficiency. But never was the love of the people for the Red Army so great nor did the desire of the people to provide the Red Army with everything it needed to manifest itself with such force and on such a scale as in these days of our greatest patriotic war.

From the very first days of the war the workers of Moscow and Leningrad began to create new regiments to form a "Home Guard" to assist the regular Red Army. And when the enemy approached Odessa, Leningrad, Sevastopol, Tula, Moscow, Stalingrad and other cities, literally the entire population of these cities and their environs rose like one man to help the Army. Industrial workers and collective farmers of both sexes, scientists and teachers, doctors and engineers, actors and musicians all went out to help to build the defences and then defended their cities with arms in their hands, side by side with the regular troops of the Red Army. Others joined guerilla groups in order to assist the Red Army by harassing the enemy's rear.

In the course of the war a large number of volunteers have joined the ranks of the Red Army, among them women as well as men, old men as well as youngsters. The Cossacks of the Kuban enlisted by whole families to defend their homeland. Mikhail Fyodorovich Grachev, an old Cossack guardsman, is sixty-three years old. He fought against the Germans in the first world war, in the years of civil war and foreign intervention. Grachev knows the ways of the German invaders well. So having seen off his six sons who went to fight, the old man himself volunteered for active service.

Soviet citizens are incessantly concerned with the welfare of their Army. A movement for the creation of a special defence fund was developed on a large scale throughout the country from the very first days of the war, and the people have contributed tremendous sums in cash and valuables to this fund. The State War Loan issued in 1942 was taken up with exceptional speed. Subscriptions to the loan in the first ten days amounted to 12,860,831,000 roubles. The target amount envisaged by the government was oversubscribed by 2,860,831,000 roubles, the greater part of the loan being paid in on the spot.

Trainload after trainload of gifts for the Red Army move in an uninterrupted stream towards the front line. The gifts are accompanied by letters imbued with burning hatred of the enemy, profound faith in victory, and tender affection and warm feeling towards the men of the Red Army.

Correspondence between the front and the rear has become very widespread in recent months. Not only relatives or friends write to men at the front, but groups of industrial workers and collective farmers, schoolchildren and students, women and girls, and children who have only just learned to read and write.

The Red Army men or commanders who in the course of the war have lost their homes, families or friends are the objects of particular solicitude on the part of the Soviet public.

The fighting men at the front are bound up with the rear by a thousand threads. The rear provides the front with spiritual nourishment, gives it moral support and stimulus and inspires it to heroism, courage, firmness and bravery.

A popular mass movement to collect personal savings of Soviet citizens for the purpose of building aeroplanes, tanks and other weapons for the Red Army has swept the country. The initiative in this noble enterprise belongs to collective farmers of the Tambov district. They collected and paid into the State Bank 40 million roubles for the constitution of a tank column which was to be named "Tambov Collective Farmer." They also sent a telegram to Stalin informing him of what they had done. Stalin sent the collective farmers of Tambov this telegram in reply: "Convey to the collective farmers of the Tambov region who collected forty million roubles for the Red Army fund and the construction of a tank column to be named 'Tambov Collective Farmer' my fraternal greetings and the gratitude of the Red Army."

Thousands of Soviet patriots followed this example. Among them were industrial workers and collective farmers, intellectuals and priests, students and school-children, men and commanders of the Red Army, members of the Bolshevik Party and non-members, men and women of all ages and all nationalities. They have given the front all their personal savings. Such a mighty surge of patriotism, such enthusiasm has never been seen in any country before.

III. NATIONAL BROTHERHOOD.

Another great source of strength for the Red Army consists in the fact that it is an army expressing the fraternity and friendship existing between the many different peoples of our country.

In the Red Army there is, and can be, no racial hatred. In contradistinction to the Hitlerite army, educated in the spirit of inhuman "race theories" and trained in practice to plunder and enslave other nations, the Red Army has been educated to regard all nations and races as equal and to respect them all.

This fact is based on the fundamental law of the U.S.S.R., whose Constitution lays down:

"Article 123: The equality of the rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indestructible law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as the advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred or contempt, is punishable by law."

Every man and every commander of the Red Army, to whatever nationality he may belong, knows that wherever he is, on whatever sector of the vast front, he is still defending his own people and his own country, his own house and collective farm, his own factory, his own town, his own state and his own rights, the honour of his ancestors and the future of his descendants.

"We came here from many parts of the Soviet country, but in defending Stalingrad we all know that what we are defending here is our country, our people and our family," wrote the heroic defenders of Stalingrad to Stalin.

In the ranks of the Red Army Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Georgians, Kazakhs and Azerbaidjanians, Uzbeks, Armenians and the sons of many other peoples of the U.S.S.R. are fighting shoulder to shoulder against the German invaders. As in the past, so now, they are inspired by the example set them by the Russian people.

IV. STALIN'S LEADERSHIP.

The strength of the Red Army lies further in the genius of its strategical and tactical leadership, in the wisdom of its Commander-in-Chief Stalin.

Twenty-five years ago Stalin, together with Lenin, founded the Red Army. Together with Lenin he cherished and trained the Red Army, led it in its struggle against the White Guards and the foreign armies of intervention.

In 1918-1920 Stalin was the only man Lenin sent from one battle front to another, picking the most dangerous spots, the sectors where the danger to the Soviets was the greatest. When it was comparatively quiet and comfortable, when things were going well, no one saw Stalin, but where for any reason the ranks of the Red Armies were crumbling, where the enemy, exploiting his successes, threatened the very existence of the Soviet system, where muddle and panic might at any moment turn into a catastrophe, there Stalin put in an appearance with certainty. He did not sleep at night, he organised, he took the leadership into his firm hands, he broke through, he was merciless to traitors, cowards and panic-mongers and—he saved the situation.

Thus it was on the eastern front, at Tsaritsyn (the old name of Stalingrad) and at Perm, thus it was at Petrograd in the spring of 1919, thus it was on the southern front and in the war against Wrangel.

In the autumn of 1918 the position of the Soviet forces at Tsaritsyn was almost catastrophic. The White Guard forces of General Krasnov were hustling our troops. The enemy's front, with both its flanks established on the Volga, was growing ever narrower. It looked as if there were no way out, as if Krasnov's victory were inevitable. Krasnov himself was quite convinced of this and was already planning an attack on Moscow. But Stalin upset all the plans and calculations of the White Guard command. Under his leadership the bands of Krasnov were thrown back from Tsaritsyn, and many of their regiments surrounded and wiped out by our troops.

The memory of the heroic defence of Tsaritsyn in 1918 lived in the men, the commanders and the political workers of the Stalingrad front; it multiplied their forces and strengthened their faith in victory. As it was twenty-five years ago, so now the Red Army in other more difficult circumstances drove back the Hitlerite bands from Stalingrad, routed thirty-six and surrounded and wiped out twenty-two enemy divisions.

In the years of the civil war and foreign armed intervention, Stalin created the ground-work for a Soviet military science and thus laid the foundations of the military successes achieved by the Red Army in the present war.

Stalin worked indefatigably to strengthen and develop the defences of our country, to increase the power of our Red Army. It is thanks to the genius of Lenin and Stalin that our country has been in existence for more than twenty-five years. Only thanks to the Stalin policy of industrialisation and collectivisation did and does the Red Army receive more and more of the weapons, munitions and food it requires. The admirable foresight of Stalin enabled the Soviet people to make economic, political and military preparations to meet the great trials brought upon them by this war.

Ever since the Hitlerites took power in Germany, Stalin repeatedly warned the Soviet people and the whole world of the danger of war. As long ago as 1934 Stalin said:

"Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations and the spectre of revenge have further added to the tension and have given a fresh impetus to the growth of armaments in Europe.

"It is not surprising that bourgeois pacifism is now dragging out a miserable existence, and that idle talk of disarmament is giving way to 'business-like' talk about armament and rearmament.

"Again, as in 1914, the parties of bellicose imperialism, the parties of war and revenge are coming into the foreground.

"It is obvious that things are moving in the direction of war."*

At the same time Stalin exposed the war preparations of the Hitlerites and showed that an attempt by the German Fascists to put into practice their theory of world domination by a "superior race" must lead to an isolation of Hitlerite Germany and her inevitable defeat.

Five years later Stalin again warned the world of the growing threat of Fascism. In his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party Stalin showed that the withdrawal of the Fascist countries from the League of Nations was not a coincidence and that these countries were preparing the way for war. Stalin exposed the policy of the Fascist rulers who tried to conceal their aggressive intentions from the eyes of the world behind a suitable "influencing" of public opinion. He showed that the block of Fascist countries in Europe, the so-called Rome-Berlin Axis, was not a harmless geometrical exercise but a genuine military alliance directed against all democratic powers. He further showed that the anti-Comintern pact concluded between the Fascist states was by no means intended to pave the way for a war against the Comintern, as the Fascists tried to represent it. The anti-Comintern pact was a screen destined to hide from the public opinion of the world the Fascist policy of a war against all democratic countries. At that time already Stalin exposed the perils of the Munich policy of non-intervention and neutrality and showed that such a policy would merely help the aggressors to unleash a war.

But having warned the world of the danger threatening it from the German-Fascist aggressors, Stalin made it his business above all to see that the Soviet Union was well prepared to meet the threat of war.

On March 10, 1939, Stalin said: "While our country is unswervingly pursuing a policy of preserving peace, it is at the same time doing a great deal to increase the preparedness of our Red Army and our Red Navy."

* Stalin, *Leninism* (Lawrence & Wishart), pp. 476 and 628.

This was truly a gigantic task. It consisted first of all in the successful fulfilment of the Five Year Plans, in the course of which, at the price of the greatest austerity, and through the greatest creative effort of the whole Soviet people, the industrial groundwork for the military might of the U.S.S.R. was laid. Secondly, it consisted in the exposure and destruction of the German Fascist agents in the U.S.S.R. in the persons of the Trotskyists and Bukharinists. In the third place it consisted in a number of measures to strengthen the Red Army and Red Navy, both in the quantitative and qualitative sense.

At the beginning of the patriotic war it became clear what colossal significance attached to the fact that it was Stalin who headed the Soviet State and the Red Army. His political and military genius helped the Soviet people and the Red Army, not only to stop the brutalised hordes of the Hitlerite army, but to bleed them white, exhaust them and prepare the conditions required for a complete and final annihilation.

To the Hitlerite conception of a lightning war Stalin opposed his conception of active defence, of the exhaustion and destruction of the manpower and machines of the enemy, the plan of bleeding the German Fascist army white. In his speech of July 3rd, 1941, Stalin called upon the whole Soviet people to understand the magnitude of the threat hanging over the mother-country and to tune themselves up to war pitch. He called on all citizens of the Soviet Union to "defend every inch of Soviet ground, to fight to the last breath for our towns and villages, and manifest the daring, initiative and intelligence characteristic of our people." He called on all the peoples of the Soviet Union to organise assistance of every kind for the Red Army, to strengthen its rear, to subordinate everything to the interests of the war, to carry on a merciless struggle against all disorganising influences in the rear such as deserters, panic-mongers, spies, saboteurs and enemy parachutists. He called upon the people to leave nothing behind for the invader: Not a railway engine, not a truck, not a pound of grain, not a pint of fuel, and to take away everything of value and destroy what cannot be taken away. "In the regions occupied by the enemy," Stalin said, "we must set up guerilla groups both foot and mounted, create diversionist detachments for the struggle with small units of the enemy army, for the stimulation of guerilla warfare everywhere, for the destruction of bridges, roads, telephone and telegraph communications, for the burning of forests, stores and baggage trains. In the occupied regions we must create intolerable conditions for the enemy and his accomplices, we must harass and destroy him at every step and upset all his arrangements."

This speech of Stalin, like his later speeches, inspired the Red Army and the people with a firm faith in victory and gave us a clear and unmistakable programme of action.

Stalin's speeches and Orders of the Day are an inexhaustible source of energy, initiative, firmness, courage and enterprise, embodying the determination of the Soviet people to fight the accursed enemy to their last breath.

In his speeches to the public and in his orders to the army, Stalin has unfolded the true meaning and the tasks of this great patriotic war of the Soviet people. Before the eyes of the whole world he has torn the mask from the German invaders and shown the inevitability of their military collapse.

Stalin has analysed the characteristics of each phase of the war and set the Soviet people and the Red Army specific tasks in conformity with the requirements of each phase.

Armed with the instructions of Stalin the Red Army is eliminating its deficiencies in the course of the struggle itself, is acquiring battle experience, improving its striking capacity, strengthening its iron military discipline, increasing its forces and extending its power. The Red Army is steadily bringing the hour of victory closer day by day.

To Stalin's leadership is due the initiative for the tremendous internal transformation of the Red Army, the strengthening of its military discipline, organisation and order. To him is due the profound scientific study of the experiences of the war for the improvement of the tactical methods of the Red Army, the introduction of new battle methods, of new ways of artillery and air attack, of modern principles of offensive and defensive operations and new methods in the disposition of troops.

Stalin's name inspires us to heroic deeds. The name of Stalin is the slogan of victory for the Red Army.

THE END

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